



SOCIETY OF DIAGNOSTIC MEDICAL SONOGRAPHY

2745 N Dallas Pkwy Ste 350, Plano, TX 75093-8730
(214) 473-8057 | (800) 229-9506 | (214) 473-8563 FAX | sdms.org

February 23, 2017

Representative Mark Mustio, Chair
Professional Licensure Committee
Pennsylvania House of Representatives
416 Irvis Office Bldg
Box 202044
Harrisburg, PA 17120-2044

RE: Support for Pennsylvania General Assembly House Bill 1545

Dear Representative Mustio:

I am writing on behalf of the Pennsylvania members in the Society of Diagnostic Medical Sonography (SDMS) in support of House Bill (HB) 1545, the *Pennsylvania Medical Imaging and Radiation Therapy Health and Safety Act*. The SDMS is a professional membership organization founded in 1970 to promote, advance, and educate its members and the medical community in the science of diagnostic medical sonography (using ultrasound to create medical images).

I have lived and worked in Pennsylvania all my life and live in Hunlock Creek. I was a Radiologic Technologist before becoming a Diagnostic Medical Sonographer in 1981. I serve as the Department Chair of Sonography and an Assistant Professor at Misericordia University in Dallas, Pennsylvania. I have also previously served as the President of the SDMS and the Joint Review Committee on Education in Diagnostic Medical Sonography (JRC-DMS), which is responsible for establishing, maintaining and promoting quality standards for educational programs in sonography. I have seen first-hand how certified sonographers have become a very important healthcare provider who assist physicians in their patient's diagnosis and treatment.

Tens of thousands of sonography examinations are performed each day in Pennsylvania. Sonography is not an easy skill to master, typically requiring two years or more of formal education, training, and clinical experience. It is often the first medical imaging test performed when disease is suspected, and a certified sonographer has the necessary knowledge, education, training, and experience to properly perform sonography examinations.

Sonography is the most operator-dependent imaging modality. If the sonography examination is not performed properly, the physician may make the wrong diagnosis or treatment decision based on incorrect information, leading to unnecessary and costly invasive procedures (e.g., surgery) or the physician may discharge the patient when they need treatment (e.g., a carotid artery is blocked, and the patient subsequently experiences a stroke or dies).

And while sonography is generally considered safer than ionizing radiation imaging examinations (e.g., x-ray or computed tomography), it is not without risk, particularly when used improperly. Certified sonographers understand the physics behind ultrasound use and work diligently to obtain the best possible image for the physician, while exposing the patient to the

least possible sound energy for the shortest time possible. This is particularly important with obstetrical/fetal sonography examinations.

All sonography examinations should be performed under the supervision and authorization (i.e., prescription) of a licensed physician and should not be performed for "entertainment" purposes. To demonstrate competency, some Pennsylvania sonographers have voluntarily obtained certification from one or more of the three nationally accredited certification organizations:

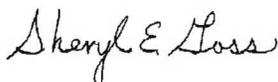
- American Registry for Diagnostic Medical Sonography (www.ardms.org)
- Cardiovascular Credentialing International (www.cci-online.org)
- American Registry of Radiologic Technologists (www.arrt.org)

While some hospitals, clinics, and physician offices in Pennsylvania only hire certified sonographers, Pennsylvanians don't know whether the person performing their sonography examination is qualified and the examination will be completed properly. A pregnant woman should not have to ask if the person who is about to perform a sonogram has had adequate education, training, and experience to competently perform the procedure. And, when a patient goes to a hospital or other medical facility, they simply expect that the healthcare providers (i.e., physicians, nurses, respiratory therapists, speech therapists, radiologic technologists, radiation therapists, sonographers, etc.) have met the standards established for each profession.

Unfortunately, no one knows exactly how many people are performing diagnostic medical sonography examinations in Pennsylvania without the proper knowledge, education, training, experience, and certification. The proposed Pennsylvania Medical Imaging and Radiation Therapy Health and Safety Act (HB 1545) would ensure that sonographers and other medical imaging professionals have met minimum requirements and are certified to perform medical imaging procedures.

I will be attending the Professional Licensure Committee's hearing on Tuesday, February 27th and I am happy to answer any questions you or the Committee may have regarding the need for HB 1545 or about the sonography profession.

Sincerely,



Sheryl Goss, MS, RT(R)(S), RDMS, RDCS, RVS, RVT, FSDMS
Immediate Past President, SDMS

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT SONOGRAPHY

Sonography – A Sound Career Decision

<http://www.sdms.org/?ID=24>

Why Sonographers Do What They Do

<http://www.sdms.org/?ID=25>

U.S. Dept. of Labor, Occupational Outlook Handbook

<http://www.sdms.org/?ID=26>

Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs

<http://www.sdms.org/?ID=27>

Sonographer National Education Curriculum (NEC)

<http://www.sdms.org/?ID=28>

Scope of Practice and Clinical Standards for the Diagnostic Medical Sonographer

<http://www.sdms.org/?ID=29>